

Elect to exercise your right to vote this year

VOTING OFFICERS RELEASE

We are now only four months from the general election to be held in 2004. We have been receiving questions on the voting hotline (842-2418) and have been able to assist some folks in their endeavors to locate their county within their state of residence and prepare to send in their absentee voter registration application.

During the Fourth of July weekend, the installation will place voter information and forms in high traffic areas for your convenience. Information posters and forms should be located in the PX mall, the Officers and Civilians Club, the Bowling Center and the Dining Facility. And of course, you can always call the voting hotline or your unit voting assistance officer for more information.

Speaking of the county of residence, did you know you could find the name of your county of residence from the U.S. Census Bureau? It's an easy "click" away on the Internet,

(<http://quickfacts.census.gov>), then select your state and do a search for the county by entering the zip code or town/city name etc. If you try this and cannot find your county, call 1-800-438-8683 and the folks at the Federal Voter Assistance Office will find out the information for you from your state election official.

Now that we've mentioned the Federal Voting Assistance Program, did you know these friendly folks provide U.S. citizens worldwide a broad range of non-partisan information and assistance to facilitate their participation in the democratic process — regardless of where they work or live. In addition, critical to the success of the FVAP programs are the thousands of uniformed services voting assistance officers and hundreds of U.S. embassy and consulate VAOs located around the globe. All of these individuals are responsible for providing accurate, non-partisan voting information and assistance to citizens attempting to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

The voting assistance officer is responsible for carrying out the three goals of the FVAP mission: Inform U.S. citizens of their right to vote; foster voting participation; and protect the integrity of, and simultaneously enhance, the electoral process.

Although we cannot direct civilian industry, corporations and organizations with U.S. citizens overseas are encouraged to designate and support VAOs. In fact, the voting assistance officer is responsible for carrying out the most vital aspects of the absentee voting program — providing direct assistance to the U.S. citizen. Although the VAOs can provide voting materials and guidance, they may not serve as witness or provide notary other than to military members and eligible dependents, unless allowed by state law.

The Department of Defense Voting

Information Center allows callers to hear messages, via an ordinary phone line, from incumbent senators and representatives, governors and secretaries of state. In addition approximately 30 days prior to an election, messages from candidates for these offices are also available. Callers have direct access through the center to their senators and representative, governor, secretary of state, chief election official, and service or department of state voting action officers. The center even has speech recognition technology on the system, so citizens can easily cruise through a series of voice commands to allow citizens to communicate with these individuals and become better informed. Call the center today at 1-800-438-8683.

Redstone's senior voting officers are Joe Winston at 842-2411 and Lewis Spencer 842-2418.

Lyme disease tick population seen growing this summer

GARRISON SAFETY RELEASE

Populations of the tick that spread Lyme disease are expected to increase in the Northeast U.S and spread out across the Midwest and South this summer, experts say.

Lyme disease is also appearing in Canada, Europe and Asia. So if you venture off the pavement into tall grass or the woods, be sure to take precautions, even if you've had Lyme disease before.

"It's not like chicken pox or measles, where you get it once and you can't get it again," said Phillip Baker, Ph.D., program officer for Lyme disease at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

If diagnosed and treated promptly, Lyme disease can usually be cured with a course of antibiotics. A quick diagnosis may be difficult; however, since the disease has high variable symptoms, about 20 percent of victims never develop the best known early symptom, "the bull's-eye rash." Other early symptoms can include headache, chills and fever, acute joint pain and sore muscles. There have

also been reports of a small number of patients who get the correct treatment having recurring symptoms after a year or more.

Avoid tick bites by taking the following steps:

- Don't sit on logs or lean against trees where ticks may be hiding.
- Keep backyards and recreation areas as clean and dry as possible.
- Wear long pants and shoes in the woods. Tuck pant legs into your socks.
- Use deet-based insect repellents or spray clothes (never skin) with a permethrin insecticide.
- After a walk in the woods, and over the next few days, check your body and your pets for ticks. If you find one embedded, grasp it with tweezers close to the skin and slowly but firmly pull it off.

This is especially important on Redstone Arsenal where there are many wooded and grassy areas. Be vigilant and stay safe and healthy.

Editor's note: Background information came from Consumer Report, July edition.

Support group starts for post traumatic stress

FOX ARMY HEALTH CENTER RELEASE

Behavioral Medicine has seen an increasing number of Soldiers with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. As a result, Dr. David Ferguson and Durwood Whitten have begun a PTSD

support group.

The group meets Friday's at 9 a.m. in Behavioral Medicine, building 3425.

These symptoms are common for Soldiers who have experienced traumas that occur in combat. The symptoms include:

- Recurring memories of the trauma that are disturbing and will not go away
- Nightmares or disturbing dreams of the traumatic events
- Acting or feeling like you are back in the traumatic events
- Feelings of distress when exposed to sounds, smells, images that resemble the trauma
- Trying not to think about the traumatic events
- Trying to avoid things or conversations that remind you of the events
- Inability to remember some of the trauma
- Lack of interest in previously enjoyable activities
- Unable to have loving feelings
- Expectations that you won't have a normal life span
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Irritability or outbursts of anger
- Difficulty concentrating
- Hyper-vigilance
- Being easily startled
- Withdrawing from friends and society.

If you have had these symptoms and they have been present for more than one month, the group may be helpful for you. Feel free to call Ferguson at 876-9085 if you have questions.

Clearing the air on ceiling fans

The Redstone Arsenal Energy Management Office wants to help you separate fact from fiction.

If you think using ceiling fans all the time in the summer will reduce cooling costs, you're mistaken, according to the Energy Management Office.

"Fans that operate constantly, especially when no one is at home to benefit from their cooling breeze, will increase rather than decrease your monthly electricity usage," a prepared release said. "Ceiling

fans use 25-75 watts of electricity each, and only help if someone is near them to enjoy the benefits of the air motion. Leave five fans on while you're on a week's vacation and you've used 42 kwh of electricity — about \$2.73 at current rates. The fans also put out heat into the house that will need to be removed by the air conditioner."

For more information, call energy manager Mark Smith 842-0014 or resource efficiency manager Bob Quick 842-0235.